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Action

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Info

FROM: BERLIN

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TO: Secretary of State

NO: 804 MARCH 16 9 PM

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SENT BONN 718 DEPARTMENT 804 REPEATED INFORMATION PARIS 200
POLAD USAREUR 231 MOSCOW LONDON UNNUMBERED

PARIS FOR EMBASSY AND CINCEUR THURSTON AND WEST

REFERENCE: PARA H OURTEL 620 TO BONN, 689 TO DEPT (SENT ALSO AS
USCOB'S 212 FEB 12).FOL IS SUMMARY OF RECENT CHECKPOINT INCIDENT MARIENBORN ALREADY
REPORTED TO EMBASSY BONN VIA MILITARY CHANNELS.

OCB

CIA

OSD

ARMY

NAVY

AIR

1. AFTERNOON MARCH 12 US ARMY SGT DARROW FROM MP HELMSTEDT
DETACHMENT ARRIVED UNDER INSTRUCTION FROM SUPERIORS AT SOV CHECK
POINT MARIENBORN. DARROW REMAINED THERE ONE-HALF HOUR BEFORE
HE WAS QUESTIONED BY SOV OFFICER AS TO REASON FOR HIS PRESENCE.
DARROW REPLIED HE WAS THERE TO ASSIST CONVOY COMMANDER IN
PROCESSING A US CONVOY THEN CHECKING THROUGH SOV CHECKPOINT
MARIENBORN. SOV OFFICER ASKED FOR DARROW'S PAPERS AND DARROW
REPLIED HE HAD NONE BUT WAS UNDER ORDERS OF US CHECKPOINT
COMMANDER CAPT. JENNINGS. DARROW DID SHOW HIS ID CARD TO SOV
OFFICER.

DARROW WAS TWICE TOLD BY SOVS TO LEAVE BUT REFUSED STATING
HE WAS UNDER ORDERS TO REMAIN UNTIL CONVOY CLEARED BY SOVS.
SOV OFFICER THEN CLEARED CONVOY ROUTINELY BUT STATED HIS COMMANDER
WAS GOING TO PROTEST DARROW'S PRESENCE AT SOV CHECKPOINT.

FYI. USCOB COMMENCED PRACTICE 26 FEB OF HAVING MP OBSERVE
CONVOY CLEARANCE PROCEDURE AT SOV CHECKPOINTS IN CASE ASSISTANCE
NEEDED BY CONVOY COMMANDERS, SOME OF WHOM ARE INEXPERIENCED.
THIS PROCEDURE FOLLOWED WITH SOME 14 CONVOYS AT BOTH NOWAWES
AND MARIENBORN IN PAST 3 WEEKS WITHOUT COMMENT FROM SOVS.

PERMANENT

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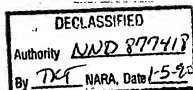
2. EARLY AFTERNOON 13 MARCH SOV CHECKPOINT OFFICER CAPT. AXSENOFF REQUESTED TALK WITH US CHECKPOINT COMMANDER CAPT JENNINGS. AXSENOFF SA D HIS SUPERIOR COL. SAFRONOV WAS CONCERNED BECAUSE US SENDING SOLDIER TO RUSSIAN CHECKPOINT EACH TIME A CONVOY CHECKED THROUGH. JENNINGS EXPLAINED SOLDIER THERE TO ASSIST CONVOY COMMANDER. AXSENOFF THEN ASKED IF JENNINGS WOULD MEET WITH SAFRONOV AT 1700 HOURS 13 MARCH. AFTER CLEARING WITH HIS SUPERIORS JENNINGS MET WITH SAFRONOV WHO STATED US SOLDIERS OBSERVING CONVOYS HAD NO DOCUMENTATION TO BE IN SOV ZONE AND BY THEIR PRESENCE MADE IT APPEAR US DID NOT TRUST SOV OFFICERS JENNINGS REPLIED SOLDIER THERE SOLELY TO ASSIST CONVOY COMMANDER IN CLEARING SOV CHECKPOINT. SAFRONOV COMMENTED THIS WAS NEW PROCEDURE OF WHICH SOVS HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED; US SOLDIERS WERE NOT VISITING SOV CHECKPOINT TO NEGOTIATE BUT RATHER WATCH SOV CONTROL OF CONVOYS. SAFRONOV ASKED THAT US DISCONTINUE THIS PROCEDURE, OTHERWISE HE MIGHT NOT ALLOW SOLDIER TO PROCEED THROUGH BARRIER AT ZONAL BORDER TO RUSSIAN CHECKPOINT. SAFRONOV ASKED THAT JENNINGS SO INFORM HIS HEADQUARTERS.

UPON RECEIPT JENNINGS ACCOUNT OF FOREGOING USCOB ARRANGED MEETING BETWEEN BERLIN COMMAND PROVOST MARSHAL COL. SALISBURY AND SAFRONOV AT 11 O'CLOCK TODAY TO DISCUSS MATTER ON AMICABLE BASIS. CONVOY WHICH SCHEDULED DEPART BERLIN MARCH 16 WAS DELAYED PENDING RESULTS THIS MEETING. USCOB AWARE THAT MP ACTUALLY CROSSES INTO SOVZONE TERRITORY WITHOUT TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION IN ORDER TO OBSERVE CONVOY CLEARANCE PROCEDURE (ONLY DOCUMENTATION POSSIBLE IS TRAVEL ORDER AUTHORIZING JOURNEY TO HELMSTEDT-BERLIN).

3. AT 11 O'CLOCK MEETING TODAY WITH COL. SAFRONOV, COL. SALISBURY EMPHASIZED PURPOSE SERVED BY US MP AT SOV CHECKPOINT WAS TO ASSIST CONVOY COMMANDER IN CLEARING CHECKPOINT. SALISBURY SAID HE CONSIDERED IT NECESSARY INSURE THAT US PERSONNEL CONDUCT THEMSELVES PROPERLY; HE WAS NOT INTERESTED IN INTERFERING WITH SOV CHECKPOINT PROCESSING BUT ONLY TO SEE NO INCIDENTS OR MISUNDERSTANDINGS OCCUR AT CHECKPOINTS. SALISBURY ALSO NOTED THAT CERTAIN DRIVERS ARE NEW OR LACK EXPERIENCE ON AUTOBAHN.

SAFRONOV SAID THAT BOTH HE AND SALISBURY KNEW THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS NOW AND IF MISUNDERSTANDING SHOULD OCCUR IT WOULD BE HANDLED AS IN PAST THROUGH SOV CONTACT WITH SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE AT US CHECKPOINT. SAID HE CONSIDERED PRESENCE MP AN INSULT TO HIM AND AN UNNECESSARY CHECK ON HIS OFFICERS IMPLYING MISTRUST OF SOV OFFICIALS. AD'S AUTHORITIES WOULD NOT PERMIT ACTIVITY THIS TYPE AT THEIR CI JINT.

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- 3 - 804, MARCH 16, 9 PM FROM BERLIN

DESPITE SALISBURY'S REPEATED INSISTENCE THAT MP THERE ONLY FOR REASONS HE HAD STATED, SAFRONOV REMAINED ADAMANT AND EMPHASIZED SOV SOLDIERS TOOK CARE OF US SOLDIERS BETWEEN SOVZONE BARRIER AND SOV CHECKPOINT SHACK. HE THEREFORE COULD NOT RPT NOT AGREE WITH OUR PROCEDURE WHICH HE HAD NOT YET REPORTED TO HIS SUPERIORS BUT WOULD DO IF MPS CONTINUED TO TRY TO COME TO SOV CHECKPOINT. SALISBURY WITH PRIOR APPROVAL GEN HAMLETT THEN AGREED US WOULD RE-DRAFT INSTRUCTIONS SO MPS WOULD NOT ENTER SOVZONE TERRITORY BEYOND THE BARRIER. MEANWHILE SALISBURY ASKED ASSURANCE SOV SOLDIERS WOULD LEAD OUR CONVOYS BETWEEN SOV CHECKPOINT SHACK AND SOV ZONE BARRIER MANNED BY GDR VOPOS. TO THIS SAFRONOV AGREED. SUBJECT TO USAREUR'S APPROVAL NEW INSTRUCTIONS WILL BE ISSUED HELMSTEDT MP PERSONNEL.

4. FOREGOING CHANGE IN INSTRUCTION WILL NOT AFFECT MP OBSERVERS AT SOV NOWAWES (BERLIN) CHECKPOINT, (WHICH UNLIKE MARIENBORN IS NOT OBSERVABLE FROM CORRESPONDING ALLIED CHECKPOINT BRAVO), NOR MP ESCORTS SOMETIMES USED AS INTEGRAL PART OF CONVOYS TRAVERSING AUTOBAHN BETWEEN BERLIN AND HELMSTEDT.

TODAY'S SCHEDULED CONVOY WILL DEPART BERLIN 1000 MARCH 17;
ESCORT NOT PLANNED.

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